PASS CHRISTIAN, MS

The Tricentennial

Volume 1, Issue Six May 15, 1998

Tricentennial News

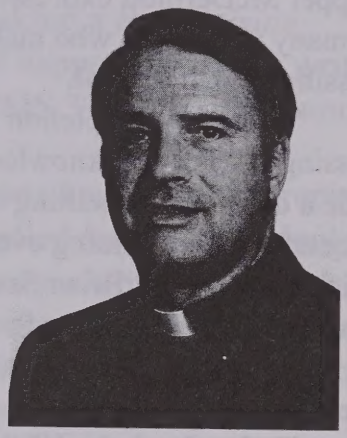
The Board of Directors recently made a change to the By-Laws to invite all residents of the Greater Pass Christian Area to participate as official members of the Pass Christian Colonization Tricentennial Committee. With this in view, members will receive a certificate as they send in their requested membership dues of Fifteen Dollars ($15).

For those who have made unsolicited contributions, we thank you for your support and you may expect to receive a confirmation of your memberships shortly.

Sub-Committees Formed

***Fund Raising** -- Chairman:*
Bob Fairbank -- 865-5515
***Special Events** -- Chairman:*
Ken Austin -- 452-5820
***Education** -- Chairperson:*
Tracy Gordon Goff -- 452-5819
***Heritage** -- Chairman:*
Virgil Harris -- 452-7068
***Merchandise** -- Vacant*
The above sub-committees are seeking active members to participate. Please call the responsible Chairperson.

Farewell Father Ron!



For the past 13 years, Father Ron has ministered to the St. Paul Catholic Faith Community. Nearly one-third of his priesthood years have been in the service of St. Paul Parish. As Father Ron, reflects, "Other priests should be so blessed!" -And, as so many Catholic and non-Catholic residents of the Pass area can truly reflect, "Our souls and our personal nature have been graced by Father Ron's presence as he shed the glory of God."

Father Ron engendered his own spiritual blessings with a dedicated zeal, which was further complemented by ecclesiastical music and cultural enhancements. He will also be remembered for the many fellowship and community affairs where appetites were whetted with his select cuisine and food-fare.

As Father Ron scripted his parting message, he asserted, "I would not trade my years here at St. Paul for anything. I have been able to share your joys and your times of sadness. I will truly miss all of you."

Father Ron's Ministry

A native of Akron, Ohio, Father Ron studied at the St. Joseph Seminary in St. Benedict, Louisiana and the Pontifical College Josephium in Worthington, Ohio. He was ordained a priest in 1968, and following ministries at Biloxi, Hattiesburg, Lumberton, and Poplarville, he was appointed to his first six-year term at Pass Christian in 1985. He was conferred as Monsignor by Bishop Joseph L. Howze of the Catholic Diocese of Biloxi in January 1988. Father Ron's new assignment is in Laurel, MS.

Alderman Chipper spreads Joy and Gratitude

Blessing of the Fleet Chairman, Chipper McDermott expresses his gratitude to the many volunteers who made the Fleet Blessing a great revival.

"With the completion of our April Blessing, I wish to acknowledge those who made a difference, resulting in a most successful Fleet Blessing event. In particular I wish to single out Brian Scarborough, Trey Campbell, Margie Schroeder, Judy Bates and J.J. Lassabbe, who deserve all the credit for management and direction."

"I also thank the VFW for donating the memorial reef, the Fire, Police, and Dive Rescue Departments for their dedicated support, our sponsors for their financial support, Supervisor David LaRosa for his continuing generous backing, John Dane for the accommodation of the *Showdown*, the Clergy and Judges for their time, and particularly the commercial and pleasure boaters for their participation. These are the real people who deserve all the credit and I thank all of you and welcome everyone aboard for next year."

Echo's of the Pass

Even as early as 1892, *The Sea Coast Echo* newspaper of Bay St. Louis would also cover social events and other points of interest within Pass Christian. The following excerpts are from that year.

- Richards & Pringle's minstrels, with Billy Kersand at the head, at Opera House, Pass Christian, Fine band and orchestra.
- Dr. W.E. Walker, - Dental Office, Monday and Friday. Located opposite Mexican Gulf Hotel (on Davis Avenue).
- Mr. J.L. dePaoli left on Monday for Pass Christian where he is one of the painters of the Mexican Gulf Hotel.
- Mr. Henry of Pass Christian's "Lone Star Saloon" spent Tuesday here on business.
- The Olympic Brass Band, of Pass Christian, will give a grand ball, on Dec. 28, 1892. The leader, Mr. J.F. Curtis, has requested "The Echo" to extend an invitation through its columns to all gentlemen and ladies of Bay St. Louis, who may wish to attend.

Gulf Coast Creole Cookin'

by Dan Ellis

Creole cooking originated on the Gulf Coast with the *"Petticoat Insurrection"*, which had taken place in the early 1700s. The rebellion resulted in a number of the imported brides having accelerated emotions due to being fed up with the tedium of colonial life. It was learned that the cause of this obfuscation was actually centered around the kitchens of these early French housewives. The women were frustrated with the lack of herbs and vegetables of which they were accustomed to in France.

Tiring of preparing corn everyday, they raised their frying pans above their heads and marched to Bienville's quarters in protest.

(Continue Next Page)

(Creole Cookin' continued)

However, they were confronted by Madame Langlois, who was charged by Bienville to oversee their problem. With motherly care, she showed them how to cook in the manner by which the Choctaw squaws had trained her, but colored with her own innovations. Within weeks the new female colonists learned how to blend native Indian dishes in a traditionally French manner. They learned how to make hominy and grits from corn and how to make gumbo filé from crushed sassafras.

This was the beginning of Creole cuisine which was yet to be fused with Spanish influence several generations later. The Spaniards had their own gleaning of the *Spices of Life* from the Incas, the Aztecs, and the Caribbean Indians.

Creole cooking is not the gift of any one country, or any one race. It is the culmination of the culinary arts from Europe and Spanish America, influenced by Negro innovations and Indian ruminations. It has become a conglomeration of distinctive and selective spices and seasoning prepared in time honored Deep Delta dishes. This fame of Creole cookery lies in the artful blending of flavors brought about by spices -- and peppers -- and a roux, which is the foundation flavoring for a subtle "dark-brown roasted" taste. Gumbos, jambalayas, stews and cuisine a-la-Creole, all begin with the succulence of a time-prepared *"roux"*.

Several ladies on the Tricentennial Committee have proffered the need for a new "Cook-Book". Those of you who wish to contribute recipes, or who wish to participate in making a *PassCuisine CookBook* a real happening, please write to POB 354, PCMS 39571, Tricentennial CookBook.

Does anyone know how to prepare an Indian dish called *Sagamité?* Wouldn't it be great to have each of the growing number of restaurants, cafés, and food-stops in the Pass include their very own secret Blue Ribbon Recipes?

D'Iberville -- On Tour

D'Iberville's Bronze Bust can still be viewed at City Hall through the month of May. Merchandise Available: Map Set III, contains 14 maps of the Pass Christian Area ranging from earliest 1700s to 1996. The set includes an 11-page chronology narrative which details the complete *Chain of Ownership* from earliest history. The set is available for $10.00 -- all proceeds go towards financing the Tricentennial activities. In June, Sieur D'Iberville will be located at the Public Library.

A view of the bronze work details the masterful capabilities of the sculptor, Michelle Smith.

GLORIA SMITH MORAN in Profile

Gloria Smith Moran, a native Mississip-pian, genealogist and historian, published the first documented family histories of several of the earliest French Colonial families on the Mississippi Gulf Coast region -- the Ladners, Morans, Nicaises, and several others. These are found in 1970-73 issues of the Journal of the Mississippi Coast Historical & Genealogical Society. As a former Editor of the Society's journal, Mrs. Moran continues to contribute to the publication. The 1996-97 issues reported her most recent family history chronicles, which documented the colonial DeDeaux family.

Ardently active with the Fort Maurepas Society at Ocean Springs, she served as its Commandant-President in 1993. She is enthusiastic about her love of Living Histories and their authenticity, which has resulted in her visiting and researching the living history programs at other successful French Colonial forts through-out the Mississippi River Valley, the Great Lakes region and in eastern Canada. Through her efforts, many of the persons and events along the Gulf Coast, calling for "dressing-out in full regalia" and mimicking the early days of colonization have been stimulated by her zeal. Realizing the need for funding to preserve the first French Coastal settlement and fort at Ocean Springs, Mrs. Moran has appeared on numerous occasions before the members of the State Legislature.

As a resident of north Pass Christian, Gloria Moran honors our Tricentennial, in serving as a member of our Historians Com-mittee. Her contributions are many, and with more than 25 years of active research, she continues her quest for the historic truth. Mrs. Moran has amassed her own library of archival histories, which represents one of the few inde-pendent colonial heritage depositories outside of a public library. She is probably the only Coastian who has taken her pursuit for discovery into many states including several trips to Canada in retracing the steps of the Acadians and the *Voyageurs* of old. Her interests began in 1970 with solving the riddle of why her husband's obviously Irish Moran relatives spoke French. Eventually, she found the name was not of Irish origin, but of French origin - M O R I N - which was anglicized here on the Gulf Coast to MORAN by about 1875. Mrs. Moran has granted permission to present excerpts from her talk given to the Historical Society in 1990.

A GENEALOGICAL VIEW

by Gloria Moran

Can you imagine our Coast without gumbo and jambalaya, without Catholicism, without Mardi Gras, with no All Saint's Day commemorations, without French Bread, without its "Mañana" attitude, without *laissez les bon temps rouler!* . . . Can you imagine that?

(Continue Genealogical Review by Gloria Moran)

--- And without the names of our waterways and towns - Biloxi Bay, Pass Marianne, the St. Louis Bay, Bayou Boisdore, Bayou Portage, Wolf River, Delisle Bayou, the Pascagoula River and City, without Pass Christian itself, and the town of Bay St. Louis? Without these French and French-Canadian things, and names, the coast would be a clone of North Mississippi. Even Jackson, Mississippi, our state capitol, was originally named LeFleur's Bluff for a Frenchman who established a trading post there on the Pearl River banks in the 1700's.

It still amuses me to read a deceased's nickname in the local obituaries. Nowhere else, except possibly in New Orleans, have I noted this custom.

When I began to document my research about twenty years ago into the origins of the old family names common to this area, I found it easier to go to civil and ecclesiastical records in New Orleans and Mobile and Canada, occasionally to French records, to find authoritative information on the early colonial families of this area.

It's easier now, as most of the records have been abstracted, indexed, published and even computerized by dedicated members of local and national genealogical and historical societies, such as yours, and by the Biloxi Historical & Genealogical Society, the Hancock County History Society, and others.

One of the earliest family names known on the Mississippi Gulf Coast is that of the Canadian family Le Moyne. Pierre Le Moyne and his younger brother Jean Baptiste Le Moyne determined and dominated Mississippi's history in the first half of the 1700's. After we had traced our Moran line to early Canada, we took our young family to Eastern Canada to follow the Moran family's migratory trail. In the old city of Montreal we made a detour to the city of Longueuil where a museum contains many personal items owned by the Le Moyne family. This town of Longueuil grew up on the site of d'Iberville and Bienville's father's seigneury (a gentleman's estate), but it was in their townhome in Montreal (across the river), where the ten brothers and sisters, and these two brothers, were probably born, in the home on the corner of Saint Sulpice and St. Paul Streets, in downtown old Montreal.

We obtained from the Le Moyne Museum, copies of the first Le Moyne's 1626 baptismal record in Dieppe, France, his and his wife's 1653 civil marriage contract, the 1661 baptismal record of d'Iberville, and copies of portraits of both d'Iberville and Bienville - which differed a bit in detail from the portraits which hang in our state capitol. Copies of these portraits were reproduced and now hang in Biloxi City Hall and other civil buildings, including the Seafood Museum, and in some business institutions along the Coast. Copies of the documents we collected were published in the October 1988 journal of the Biloxi Mississippi Coast Historical & Genealogical Society.

PRESERVATION BEGINNINGS

In August of 1852, a signing took place for the first preservation order for Pass Christian. Evidently, the informal Covenant took affect in aspiring to create the beauty and tableau which makes Scenic Drive what it is today. However, at that time there were very few streets in the Pass. With the ever increasing national coverage of Pass Christian as a Heritage Community, more and more visitors come by to share the beauty that most of us enjoy every day.

The Agreement was signed by 15 Gulf front property owners preventing the building of obstuctions by themselves and their assigns, which would inhibit sea breezes or the view of the Gulf. The area covered in that covenant started from Egerton's lot eastward. Egerton's residence would have been located in the 300 block of E. Beach. The signers were: J.W. Payne, J.J. Green, Thomas Kershaw, James F. Roach, Percival B. McCutchon, S. Mathews, Samuel McCutchon, J.P. Harrison, William B. McCutchon, George C. Lawrason, Robert Seaton, Thomas Hale, A. Green, A. Desrayeaux, and William E. Leverich.

This is another bit of information gleaned from the Deed Books of the Harrison County Courthouse Archives.

MANORS SUPREME

Some of the glorious and historically important homes of the Pass beachfront have been lost forever. Some through hurricanes and others by fire.

Missing is the Alice Hendron home where President Woodrow Wilson spent his Christmas vacation of 1913, and as other presidents followed, the home became known as the *Dixie White House.*

Now, only the Historic Marker stands guard at a mostly vacant corner.

Missing is the home of the famed newspaper columnist, Dorothy Dix.

There, she wrote most of the material that she penned in "letters to the lovelorn." That place was lost to fire.

Missing is the beautiful Ossian Hall that signalled the magnificent presence of great architectural design. Formerly known as the "Old Miltenberger Place" at the Beach Hurst subdivision, it faced the Gulf across East Beach Boulevard, which in 1919, was the filming location for Marguerite Clark's movie, *"Come Out of the Kitchen."*

Also, passed through the tunnel of dreams and nostalgia was the splendid mansion-home of John Henderson.

These great places have slipped into history and are now remembered only from photographs and stories of their times. However, the lovely beachfront land remains and is continually rebuilt in renewed magnificence in sharing the glory of the remaining historic homes.

Billy Bourdin (Museé Bourdin) gladly responds to anyones wishes to view the hundreds of photographs mounted on his walls, easels, and photobooks housed at his Davis Avenue shop.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

In addition to primary source historical records, our Gulf coast heritage leans heavily on myths, tales, and folklore. From them, names and origins have been derived. Needless to say, there are several locations along the Gulf coast which had predecessor names that through the years have become significantly different today.

(What's In A Name continued)

One as such, is Pass Christian. According to several early French maps, the area was called *Passe aux Huîtres*, meaning Oyster Pass.

The French "Founding Fathers" had a penchant for naming everything! Deer Island for the deer. Horn Island for a lost powder horn. Isle aux Pois for a bag of peas. Riviere aux Perles for pearls they found. -- and Saints and Holy days abounded.

In the Bay St. Louis area, by further map-scanning, the peninsula was first named *Fontaine* for the many fountains and natural springs found there. By request for a land grant in 1783, the northern area of present-day Bay St. Louis was called *Achoucoupoulous*. During later years, in the mid 1840s, another map indicates that along its northeastern coast, the Bay St. Louis peninsula was named *Shieldsboro*, while at its southeastern shores, it was called *Guexville*.

Cat Island, as we know it, was not always called *Isle aux Chats* by the French. On occasion it was called *Isle Bourbon*.

Incidentally, the *County of Bourbon* was also the name used by the state of Georgia in its reference to claims of almost all the Mississippi Territory prior to 1817 statehood.

Following the Louisiana Purchase from France in 1803, Spanish West Florida spread from Baton Rouge and Natchez along the Mississippi, to Pensacola on the east, the Gulf of Mexico on the South and the 31st parallel on the North.

When Louisiana became a state in 1812, its boundaries were extended to the Pearl River (that part which forms the "boot" of Louisiana), leaving the remaining West Florida lands from the Pearl to the Perdido River to be included in the Mississippi Territory. That coastal region was then known as the *County of Mobile.*

Eventually, Mobile County was divided into three new counties of Hancock, Jackson, and Mobile; with Hancock being named for John Hancock, signer of the Declaration of Independence, Jackson for Andrew, and Mobile for the Mobilia Indians. In 1841, Harrison County was carved from Hancock County.

In no other U.S. territory, were land entanglements so restrained in preventing statehood as had occurred in Mississippi. It was said that, "Land claims overlapped like shingles on a roof." This was due to Mississippi's evolvement through four influencing governments: France, England, Spain and the state of Georgia. These land claims were finally resolved over many years by the United States court system in what is called the *American Papers*.

Sunset in the Pass

There comes a time at day's end
When nature's lights diffuse,
When God begins to paint the sky
In pink and purple hues,

When the sun, in golden raiment,
Sinks slowly down to rest,
When colors brilliant fill the sky
And wonder fills my breast.

For now's the time that I reflect
As night's sweet repose arrives,
What colors might we leave behind
In the sunset of our lives?

by Jessie H.

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The Tricentennial

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